

WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For more information, contact:
Mike Gowrylow
(360) 570-6048

Property Tax Relief Available to Seniors and the Disabled

OLYMPIA, Wash., Dec. 6, 2006 — Some senior citizens and the disabled may be missing out on property tax relief.

Nearly 116,000 individuals saved \$161.5 million through property tax exemptions in 2006, and almost 500 individuals deferred payment of \$700,000 in property taxes and special assessments, but county assessors believe that not everyone who qualifies for these programs takes advantage of them.

Applicants with a disposable household income of \$35,000 or less can be exempted from all voter-approved levies and bonds, and those earning \$30,000 or less can be exempted from a portion of regular levies as well. In addition, the assessed value of a home is frozen at its value as of Jan. 1 of the application year.

To qualify for this program and receive a reduction on 2007 property taxes, an applicant must be at least 61 years of age or disabled by Dec. 31, 2006, and have a 2006 annual household income of \$35,000 or less. Assessors encourage people to apply before they receive their tax bills next spring.

Under the deferral program, the Department of Revenue pays property taxes and special assessments for the homeowner. When the property is sold or inherited, the deferred amount is repaid with interest. The interest rate will be five percent for payments made in 2007.

- more -

To qualify for the deferral program and receive assistance in 2007, an applicant's 2006 annual household income must be \$40,000 or less and he or she must be disabled or at least 60 years old by Dec. 31, 2007.

Household income for both programs includes the disposable income of the homeowner and spouse and any co-tenants. Only the applicant must meet the age or disability requirement. Tax relief is limited to owner-occupied residences and up to five acres of property, depending on zoning.

For more information on these programs, contact your county assessor or visit http://dor.wa.gov/Docs/Pubs/Prop_Tax/SeniorDefs.pdf and http://dor.wa.gov/Docs/Pubs/Prop_Tax/SeniorExempt.pdf.

Property Tax Assistance Eligibility Requirements

	Deferral Program	Exemption Program
Age OR Disability	60 years old on December 31 of application year (application year is same as tax year) OR Unable to work due to disability	61 years old on December 31 of application year (the year before the taxes are due) OR Unable to work due to disability; or Veteran with 100% service-connected disability
Disposable income level	Cannot exceed \$40,000* (including applicant, spouse & co-tenants)	Cannot exceed \$35,000 (including applicant, spouse & co-tenants)
Property ownership	Fee owner or contract purchase Irrevocable trust may qualify	Fee owner; or contract purchase; or Life estate or lease for life; or Revocable trust may qualify
Residency	Principal home occupied for more than six months each year	Principal home occupied for more than six months each year

###

To inquire about the availability of this document in an alternate format for the visually impaired, please call (360) 705-6715. Teletype (TTY) users please call 1-800-451-7985.